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OCCUPATIONAL FOLLOW-UP STUDY

OF STUDENTS OF NEWTON COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

(TITLE)

BY

Marsha Kuhl

B.S. in Education, Eastern Illinois University

1963

PLAN B PAPER

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1965

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS PLAN B PAPER BE ACCEPTED AS
FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE DEGREE, M.S. IN ED.

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DEPARTMENT HEAD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.ii
LIST OF TABLES.	iii
CHAPTER I-INTRODUCTION.	1
Statement of Purpose	
Limitations of the Survey	
Procedures and Treatment of Data	
CHAPTER II-RELATED RESEARCH.7
CHAPTER III-RESULTS OF THE GRADUATE QUESTIONNAIRE.	11
CHAPTER IV-SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.42
APPENDICES.47
BIBLIOGRAPHY.53

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LIST OF TABLES

1. Comparison of High School Plans and Actual Jobs Held. . . .	14
2. All Jobs Ever Held by Newton Graduates Surveyed.	17
3. Present Jobs Held by Newton Graduates Surveyed.	18
4. Educational Training Beyond High School.	20
5. School's Influence on Student's Future Vocations.	22
6. High School Courses Considered Most Useful, Fairly Useful, and Least Useful.	25
7. Students' Knowledge of Their Own Test Scores.	31
8. Possible Procedures to Help Students to Choose Vocations. .	33
9. Replies from Students as to What the School Should Do to Help the Student Who Wishes to Further His Education. .	35
10. The School's Role in Helping Alumni.	37

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The problem of assisting students to decide upon their future employment and education continues to become greater as more and more students enter the schools each year and as population totals zoom to new highs. Schools need to keep the students enrolled and prepare them for futures to suit their individual needs. "The National Consumer Finance Association says that the fellow who drops out of high school will earn about \$40,000 less in his working lifetime than the high school graduate."¹ As the years progress there is becoming a steadily decreasing demand for people who have no skills. Scholastic Scope recently stated that there are presently approximately 5,000,000 American workers who have no jobs. Most of these unemployed are people who have no saleable skill to offer. As our population increases more and more people are seeking jobs and the people with skills usually get the first chances at the jobs.

¹"How Dropping Out of School Can Cost You \$40,000," Scholastic Scope, November 11, 1964, p. 29.

"Every day, 8,400 people are finding that their jobs no longer exist."² Consequently, this puts a strong responsibility upon the schools for seeing that its graduates are trained for jobs which will still be in demand, or trained sufficiently in order to gain entrance into their chosen higher educational institution.

Frank Parsons attempted to help solve the problem of helping students to decide upon suitable futures by organizing his Vocational Guidance Bureau in 1908. By 1912 a National Vocational Guidance Association had been organized. This Association formulated a definition of vocational guidance which was stated as follows: "Vocational guidance is the process of assisting the individual to choose an occupation, prepare for it, enter upon and progress in it."³

Gradually more schools have come to realize the need for guiding their students. The states have realized a need for counseling and have required guidance in the schools. The schools need to evaluate their present guidance and educational programs in order to determine whether or not their programs are meeting the vocational and educational needs of their graduates.

²"The Job in Your Future--Will It Still Be There," Scholastic Scope, November 11, 1964, p. 36.

³Robert Hoppock, Occupational Information (New York, San Francisco, Toronto, London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1963), p. 185.

This paper was written with the thought of evaluating the present school program. According to Hoppock the purpose of a follow-up study is as follows:

Many high school and college students have only vague and limited knowledge of the employment opportunities which they may expect to find when they are ready to look for a job. As a result, their occupational plans are often vague, unrealistic, and restricted to the few occupations with which they are familiar. Their concepts of beginning jobs are reflected in the popular caricatures of the college graduate who wants to start as a executive. Their salary expectations are based on rumors they have heard about the fabulous earnings of an atypical few.

The major purpose of the follow-up study is to give the students a more realistic picture of their future by helping them to find out what has happened to those who have preceded them.⁴

The information contained in this report about past graduates will be instrumental in counseling present and future students, although there is a need for other surveys similar to the one presented on the following pages.

⁴Ibid., 202-203.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this survey was to try to determine to what degree the Newton Community High School system was meeting the occupational and educational needs of its graduates.

This survey attempted to answer the following questions:

- A. What kinds of occupations have Newton graduates entered, were they adequately prepared for these occupations, and were they satisfied in these fields?
- B. What kinds of educational training have Newton graduates had beyond high school and did the high school help students to gain entrance into the educational institution of their choice?
- C. What training did students receive in high school which they believed had been of least and of most value to them and which they believed would be of least or of most value to students in the future?
- D. Did the students benefit from all of the tests which they had to take in high school--intelligence, aptitude, personality, and physical skills?
- E. What did former students believe the school should be doing to help alumni?
- F. What did former students believe the school should be doing for the betterment of its present students?

LIMITATIONS OF THE SURVEY

Firstly, this survey was limited by the use of the questionnaire method. Personal interviews would have produced more accurate information and would have had a much greater percentage of return had this method been possible. However, because of the great expense which would have been incurred by conducting so many personal interviews in so many different cities and states this method was ruled out and the questionnaire was decided upon.

Also, the survey was limited by the number of questionnaires which were completed and returned. There were nine questionnaires which were returned because of improper addresses. The addresses of these students were never located. In most cases the former student and all of his relatives had moved away. In one of the nine cases, the father of one of the girls was telephoned. When asked concerning his daughter's address, he replied that he thought she was living in Cairo, Illinois, but he had no idea what her address was and he could mention no other person to call for further information.

A total of 461 questionnaires were believed to have been received by the former graduates; however, only 203 of these were completed and returned, leaving a total return of 44%.

PROCEDURES AND TREATMENT OF DATA

A plan for conducting this survey was developed during the summer of 1964. The questionnaire was presented to Mr. Hewey Tweedy, superintendent of Newton Community High School, and he agreed to appropriate funds to finance the stationery and stamps.

A copy of the questionnaire, accompanied by a letter of explanation signed by Mr. Tweedy and the writer of this paper, was mailed during October 1964 to each student who graduated from the high school during 1960, 1962, and 1964.

The information gained from this survey has been compiled, condensed, and in several cases presented in a tabular form to enable quicker and easier interpretation.

The material was then analyzed in order to try to determine what these alumni feel the school should do to make improvements in the future.

CHAPTER II

RELATED RESEARCH

Other students had done research on problems similar to the one chosen for this paper. In 1963 Loy Morris Simcox did a paper surveying the local community of Altamont, Illinois. His survey was one conducted in a very small high school where the graduating classes numbered from 39 to 57; therefore, some of the conditions would have been quite different from those in Newton where the graduating classes numbered from 150 to 170.

The results of his survey as stated in his summary were as follows:

36% of Altamont's graduates continued their education by attending college. Taking into consideration trade schools and nursing, 45% of the males continued to further their education, compared to 42% of the females.

Clerical type jobs accounted for nearly a quarter of the 64% of the graduates having jobs. Full time housewives, not working outside the home, accounted for 20% of the graduates holding jobs. Farming ranked third, which was not too alarming considering Altamont is primarily a farming community. Full time housewives accounted for 35% of the female job holders.

The majority of graduates were not well prepared for what they did or are doing after graduation. Both sexes modestly admitted that they were reasonably prepared.

The largest percentage of graduates advised present students to determine their

plans early and choose courses in their chosen field, as well as to take education seriously.

Most of the Altamont graduates received no help, from the school, in either finding a job or deciding on a school or college for further education or training.

Unanimously, answers showed a desire for future graduates to receive more vocational guidance and continued follow-up aid in establishing their careers.

Clerical courses and home economics were considered most beneficial to female graduates, in courses not required. Male graduates indicated agriculture and shop work as most beneficial, in courses not required. Graduates continuing their education placed emphasis on English, mathematics, science, history and language as being most beneficial. Both sexes indicated art as being the least beneficial.

These conclusions lead to the following recommendations. As many of the local businessmen indicated a weakness in mathematics, English, and salesmanship, in Altamont High School graduates, the present faculty and administration should evaluate its curriculum, program, and teaching techniques to determine weaknesses. A further recommendation should be for the school to investigate the possibility of sharing an instructor of Distributive Education and Diversified Occupations, with neighboring schools, to help alleviate the weakness of graduates in salesmanship found by the local businessmen.

The fact that 64% of Altamont's graduates are not going to college points out the recommendation for a strong secondary school program of terminal nature, including vocational. A need to provide additional opportunities for non-professional or non-degree student programs; and a need for maintaining a balanced curriculum which will serve the needs of youth entering many different walks of life.

In regards to 70% of the graduates acknowledging a great need for vocational guidance, it is recommended the faculty and administration discuss the desperate need for student counseling and take necessary steps in acquiring a full time guidance counselor.

The findings seem to indicate the high school should evaluate the possibility of establishing a placement service, in answer to the desires made by many graduates.⁵

The conclusions and recommendations which Simcox presented were similar in many cases to the decisions reached by the writer of this paper.

In another paper done in 1963 by Frances C. Wallace connected with the Effingham, Illinois, community it was found that:

the effectiveness of the high school guidance program could be augmented greatly by an extension of the guidance services downward to the kindergarten or, at least, the first grade.⁶

Another recommendation of Wallace's which was significant to my research was that she suggested an increase in the number of counselors.

The enrollment of 750 students demands, at least, the equivalent to two and one-half counselors. This addition would give the

⁵Loy Morris Simcox, "An Independent Occupational Survey of Local Community" (unpublished Master's dissertation, Department of Education, Eastern Illinois University, 1963), pp. 36-39.

⁶Frances C. Wallace, "Job Opportunities in Effingham, Illinois, for Adolescents with a Terminal Education of Grade Twelve or Less" (unpublished Master's dissertation, Department of Education, Eastern Illinois University, 1963), p. 23.

counselors the additional time needed to guide the students into more realistic programs, and to help them in making more definite future plans. The student who drops out because of lack of interest in his program, or because it is too difficult for him, will drop out again if he returns to the same one. The curriculum at the high school includes commercial subjects and shop programs as well as the college preparatory program. Many times it is only a question of guiding the student into the proper curriculum in order to hold him in school and for him to profit from his remaining in school until he graduates. At present, the counseling staff is too over-loaded to reach all of the students.⁷

Although Wallace's paper was primarily concerned with the job opportunities in Effingham, Illinois, her paper pointed out the idea that sufficient guidance was the answer to many of the problems which plagued high school students. All during their school years students needed someone who was not too busy and who cared about them to have answered their questions and to have guided them, without pushing them, into futures suited for them.

⁷Ibid., 24.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS OF THE GRADUATE QUESTIONNAIRE

The total graduate questionnaire return was 44%.

Of the three classes surveyed the class of 1960 had the greatest percentage of return with 44.2%. A total of 153 students were in the class of 1960. Six of the students in this class were not contacted because their addresses were unable to be determined; therefore, a total of 147 questionnaires were believed to have been received by members of this class. A total of 65 questionnaires were returned by students from the class of 1960--30 returned by girls and 35 returned by boys.

Of the 151 students in the class of 1962, three students were not contacted because their addresses could not be determined. Therefore, a total of 148 questionnaires were believed to have been received by members of this class. Of the 65 questionnaires returned by members of the class of 1962, 35 were returned by girls and 30 were returned by boys. The total returned from this class was 43.9%.

All of the 166 members of the class of 1964 were believed to have received questionnaires. A total of 73 questionnaires were returned by members of this class--37 coming from girls and 36 coming from boys. The total return from this class was 44%.

Twenty-six of the students answering the questionnaire stated that at the time they graduated from high school they had no idea what the future held for them. Only four of these students with no future plans graduated last year and so perhaps this might indicate that the school is beginning to do a better job of guidance.

The alumni reporting they were dissatisfied complained about not having a chance for advancement and because they disliked the hard work for the meager pay. The class of 1960 had the smallest percentage of persons who were dissatisfied in their present occupations. In addition to the complaints previously mentioned these students objected to working for the public and to the drudgery of factory work. Several boys from the classes of 1962 and 1964 voiced the complaint that they were dissatisfied with military service because of the restrictions placed upon them. One girl stated that she was satisfied because she was in college; however, she stated that she would not be satisfied when she graduated. Another girl who stated, "I had planned to go to school for one year and then get married," was satisfied with her present occupation although she very much disliked to wash dishes. Another graduate stated that he was dissatisfied "as a result of dreams placed in my head by society." Other objections were working at night and also having to work so many hours that no time was left to attend college or even to go to school at night.

Several students, 38, had deviated from their original plans. Some of these students had to work to earn money for various reasons and therefore had not had the time to pursue their chosen paths. Several of the others were girls who had plans for work or education but had married instead; these girls seemed to have managed very well because most of them reported that they were satisfied with their lives as housewives. Many of the students who answered the questionnaires were still in colleges of various kinds.

As to how long these former students intended to remain in their present occupations, most of the 38 who were not in their chosen occupations and others who were in the occupation of their original choice expressed desire for a change as soon as possible. Most of them, if they planned to stay for as long as five years, planned to remain in the same occupation for an indefinite period of time. Others who did plan to change, in many cases, wanted to leave immediately but felt that they must stay as many as five years in order to get the money to do what they wished, which in many cases was to go on to school. Few of the dissatisfied students expressed feelings of resignation. They still seemed to be trying to get into the occupation in which they felt they would be satisfied. One former student said that he didn't dislike anything in particular about his present job but he "would rather drive race cars." This graduate did

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF HIGH SCHOOL PLANS AND ACTUAL JOBS HELD

Year Graduated	Had No Plans	Satisfied with Present Occupation		Now Have or Preparing for First Job Planned		Have Same Plans for Future Years				When Decided on Present Plans			
		Yes	No	Yes	No	1 yr.	5 yr.	10 yr.	Indef.	G.S.	H.S.	After H.S.	Col.
1960	13	91%	9%	38	14	14%	12%	3%	71%	11%	43%	36%	10%
1962	9	78%	22%	47	9	18%	15%	0	67%	14%	47%	31%	8%
1964	4	81%	19%	54	15	23%	34%	5.5%	37.5%	12%	64%	22%	2%

not state whether he was taking any steps in the direction of his preferred vocation. Others of the former female students who planned to remain in their present jobs for only a short time stated that they planned to get married and then be a mother and a housewife; however, these girls were not necessarily dissatisfied with their present work. Several of the former male students planned to enlist in various facets of the military service. In most cases these were boys who were dissatisfied with their present work because of routine, poor pay, or no chance for advancement.

When asked when they decided upon their present plans, approximately 12% of the students answered that they had already made up their minds before entering high school. Several of these students were ones who had always intended to be a teacher, nurse, or a farmer. The area surrounding Newton is covered almost entirely by farm lands and many of the boys stated that they had always wanted to be farmers. However, land is becoming harder to obtain, perhaps because the price is continually rising or perhaps because farmers are now able to care for more acres. And so, several boys, who even in grade school had wanted to be farmers, have had to pursue other fields.

Table 1 indicated that 64% of the graduates of 1964 decided on their future plans while still in high school as compared to 43% in 1960 and 47% in 1962. This would perhaps

tend to indicate that the school was helping students somewhat more in 1964 than it was formerly to decide upon vocations. The percentage of students who had not made up their minds as to their futures before leaving high school had been continually declining. However, still alarmingly large numbers of students were leaving the high school with no plans and some of the students, although the percentage had been declining over the past five years, were going on to college before deciding what field they were interested in. This could be tragic because if students were going to go to college they should have prepared for their college work by taking appropriate courses while in junior high school and in high school.

Tables 2 and 3 were quite similar. When one considered all the jobs which the students who were surveyed had ever had and compared the results with the jobs which these same students had at the time of the survey, the same jobs or occupations ranked high.

At the time this paper was written, as in the past, Newton had more graduates enrolled as students than in any other occupation. This was as one would expect as Table 4 which follows showed that over 50% of Newton's graduates furthered their educations.

The job of being a secretary ranked second, percentage wise, with more students from the class of 1964 working

TABLE 2

ALL JOBS EVER HELD BY NEWTON GRADUATES SURVEYED

	1960		1962		1964	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Students	23	16.7%	16	18.4%	23	29%
Secretaries	28	19.4%	15	17.2%	17	21.5%
Factory Work	19	13.2%	0	0	12	15.1%
Farming and Farm Workers	11	7.6%	2	2.2%	10	12.6%
Military	10	7.1%	11	12.6%	2	2.5%
Housewives	8	5.6%	1	1.1%	1	1.3%
Teaching	5	3.5%	0	0	0	0
Clerks	4	2.8%	3	3.4%	2	2.5%
Nursing	3	2.1%	4	3.4%	1	1.3%
					(in school)	
Salesmen	3	2.1%	1	1.1%	0	0
Restaurant Work	3	2.1%	1	1.1%	0	0
Telephone Operator	2	1.3%	1	1.1%	1	1.3%
Masseur	2	1.3%	0	0	0	0
Road Work for State	2	1.3%	1	1.1%	4	5.1%
Station Attendant	1	.7%	0	0	3	3.9%
Carpenter	1	.7%	3	3.4%	0	0.2%
Norris Electric Co.	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Library Work	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Accountant	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Pottery Caster	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Furnace Repairman	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Heavy Equip. Operator	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Barber and Beauty Work	2	1.3%	3	3.4%	1	1.3%
					(in school)	
Auto Repair	1	.7%	9	10.3%	0	0
Richlaw Service Co.	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Rex Vault Co.	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Oil Well Pumper	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Railroad Section Work	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Swimming Instructor	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Nurses' Aid	1	.7%	1	1.1%	0	0
Babysitter	0	0	1	1.1%	1	1.3%
Newspaper Work	0	0	0	0	1	1.3%
State Guidance Work	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Electrician	0	0	1	1.1%	0	0
Truck Driver	0	0	1	1.1%	0	0
Sewing Work	0	0	3	3.4%	0	0
X-Ray Technician	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Welder	1	.7%	0	0	0	0
Laborer	0	0	10	11.3%	0	0
No Job	0	0	1	1.1%	0	0

TABLE 3

PRESENT JOBS HELD BY NEWTON GRADUATES

	1960		1962		1964	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Students	10	15.4%	16	25%	23	31.5%
Secretaries	9	13.9%	15	23.1%	17	23.2%
Factory Work	7	10.8%	0	0	12	16.3%
Farming and Farm Workers	9	13.9%	2	3.1%	6	8%
Housewives	7	10.8%	1	1.5%	1	1.4%
Teachers	5	7.8%	0	0	0	0
Nurses	3	4.6%	3	4.6%	1	1.4%
					(in school)	
Military	3	4.6%	6	9.2%	2	2.8%
Auto Repair	2	3.1%	6	9.2%	0	0
Barber and Beauty Work	2	3.1%	1	1.5%	1	1.4%
					(in school)	
Station Attendant	0	0	0	0	2	2.8%
Road Work for State	0	0	1	1.5%	4	5.6%
Richlaw Service Co.	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0
X-Ray Technician	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0
Welder	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0
State Guidance Work	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0
Salesman or Sales Clerk	1	1.5%	3	4.6%	1	1.4%
Railroad Section Work	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0
Norris Electric Co.	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0
Masseur	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0
Babysitter	0	0	1	1.5%	1	1.4%
Newspaper Work	0	0	0	0	1	1.4%
Telephone Operator	0	0	1	1.5%	1	1.4%
Carpenter	0	0	3	4.6%	0	0
Electrician	0	0	1	1.5%	0	0
Restaurant Work	0	0	1	1.5%	0	0
Sewing Work	0	0	3	4.6%	0	0
No Job	0	0	1	1.5%	0	0

as secretaries. When one considers the table showing all of the jobs which these same students had, one can note that more students from the class of 1960 had been secretaries than from any of the other classes.

Factory work ranked third, although there were no graduates who answered the questionnaire from the class of 1962 who had ever been engaged in factory work.

Farming ranked fourth, perhaps contrary to what one would expect since Newton is largely a farming community. Of the class of 1960, 13.9% of the graduates were engaged in farming while noticeably smaller percentages of the classes of 1962 and 1964 were engaged in that occupation. When considering all jobs ever held, the class of 1964 ranked high in farm work; however, many of these graduates were employed at farm work only during the summers.

There did not seem to be any particular trend as to the educational training which Newton graduates had been acquiring beyond high school. The class of 1962 seemed to have been more educationally minded than the members of the other two classes. Only 10% of the boys in the class of 1962 did not receive any kind of training beyond high school although 23.3% of this training was in military service. Also, the girls from this same class had the smallest percentage of females having no further training--37.2%. In 1962, 51.4% of the girls attended regular colleges. Fewer girls attended college from

TABLE 4
EDUCATIONAL TRAINING BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

Year Grad- uated	Males							Females					
	None	College	Military	Barber College	Business College	Trade School	None	College	Beauty School	Business College	Nursing	Misc.	
1960	14 39.5%	12 31.6%	6 15.8%	1 2.6%	1 2.6%	3 7.9%	13 42%	11 35.5%	1 3.2%	1 3.2%	3 9.6%	2 6.5%	
					(3 attended more than one kind of school)								
1962	3 10%	12 40%	7 23.3%	2 6.7%	0 0	6 20%	13 37.2%	18 51.4%	1 2.8%	1 2.8%	2 5.8%	0 0	
1964	14 38.9%	14 38.9%	1 2.8%	0 0	2 5.6%	5 13.8%	20 54%	9 24.3%	1 2.7%	6 16.3%	1 2.7%	0 0	
	Total No Further Education		Total Furthering Education		Total No Further Education		Total Furthering Education		Total No Further Education		Total Furthering Education		
1960	39.5%		60.5%		42%		58%						
1962	10%		90%		37.2%		62.8%						
1964	38.9%		61.1%		54%		46%						

the class of 1964 than had been the case previously and the percentage of boys starting to college in 1964 also dropped slightly over the years surveyed although it dropped considerably from 1962.

Fewer boys entered the military service in 1964 than had entered from previous classes. The percentages had increased over the years surveyed as to the numbers of students entering business colleges. The percentages of boys attending business college was up slightly and the percentages of girls attending had raised about 13%. The number of girls entering nursing was declining slightly. Also, the number of boys entering trade schools had declined slightly from 1962 to 1964.

Table 4 indicated that well over one-half of all Newton graduates furthered their education beyond high school. This tended to indicate that the school needed a strong program for the students who planned to seek further education. However, one should keep in mind that not all of these students needed the same kind of program because they entered various types of educational institutions. On the other hand, the students who needed a terminal high school education should not have been forgotten. Perhaps a special program could have been provided for these students by presenting more practical topics to them instead of subjects usually taught to the prospective college student.

The results in Table 5, regarding the school's influence on the student's future vocations seemed to indicate

TABLE 5

SCHOOL INFLUENCE ON STUDENTS' FUTURE VOCATIONS

Year Graduated	Who in high school helped you to choose a vocation?				How much help did you receive in choosing a vocation?				How well were you prepared by the high school for what you are doing now?				How much influence did the school provide in helping you to decide on further education and in helping you get into the higher educational institution of your choice?			
	No One	Principal	Teacher	Other	Much	Very Little	Some	None	Well Prepared	Fairly Prepared	Poorly Prepared	Not Prepared	Much	Some	Very Little	None
1960	77%	0%	16%	7%	3%	24%	24%	49%	20%	50%	17%	13%	7%	28%	33%	32%
1962	57%	8%	28%	8%	12%	27%	44%	17%	24%	48%	11%	17%	17%	47%	14%	22%
1964	60%	6%	32%	2%	13.3%	26.6%	33.5%	26.6%	29.3%	54.7%	8%	8%	13.3%	40%	20%	26.7%

that the students were not receiving the help which they desired in choosing vocations. From 57% to 77% of the students who graduated over the past five years indicated that no one helped them to choose a vocation. This seemed to indicate that the guidance for these students was inadequate. Only an extremely small percentage of the students mentioned that a counselor helped them to choose a vocation. The teachers in the Newton school system seemed to have displayed more help and guidance than the counselors.

Table 5 also tended to indicate that the members of the class of 1962 received more guidance in choosing their futures than did the members of the other classes. All three years surveyed lacked help and guidance. In the class of 1960 only 3% of the graduates reported that they received a great amount of help in choosing a vocation, while 24% received very little, 24% some, and the large percentage of 49%--almost one-half of the graduates who answered the questionnaire received no help in choosing a vocation. The percentages raised slightly in 1962 when only 17% of the students received no help in choosing a vocation. Last year--1964, the students stated that 26.6%, one fourth of their number, received no counseling from anyone in the school concerning their vocational choice.

The majority of the graduates surveyed seemed to feel that they were fairly prepared for the jobs they were engaged in at the time of this survey although many were poorly

prepared and others not prepared at all. This perhaps indicated that the school should try to better prepare students for their future jobs.

Then, as to the amount of help which the high school provided for the college bound students or for the students who planned to continue their education in some way, it seemed that the percentages which were the greatest supported the contention that the school provided little help for the students who wished to continue their education. Again in 1962 the school seemed to have been doing slightly better.

When Newton graduates were asked, "What training did the school give you which you think has been of least value to you and which you feel will be of least value to future students?" a variety of answers were given.

Many of the students said that everything they had in high school was of some value to them. One wise student stated, "Everything one takes is important at some time in a person's future whether he realizes it or not." Another student said that he could not say what he believed would be of least value to future students because, "what didn't benefit me could help someone else."

A surprising thing was that more students said that English was less beneficial than any other subject. This was in direct contrast to Table 6 which indicated that high percentages of students found English to be one of their most

TABLE 6

HIGH SCHOOL COURSES CONSIDERED MOST USEFUL, FAIRLY USEFUL, AND LEAST USEFUL

	Class of 1960			Class of 1962			Class of 1964		
	Most	Fairly	Least	Most	Fairly	Least	Most	Fairly	Least
English	63%	29%	8%	77.8%	19%	3.2%	72%	21%	7%
Mathematics	69%	29%	2%	69.1%	25%	5.9%	55%	32%	14%
History	19%	32%	49%	17.1%	54.3%	28.6%	20%	49%	31%
Geography	36%	28%	36%	10.7%	50%	39.3%	18%	46%	36%
Science	38%	44%	18%	42%	36%	22%	38%	31%	31%
Foreign Language	22%	39%	39%	33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %	33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %	33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %	28%	44%	28%
Industrial Arts	86%	2%	12%	29%	52%	19%	29%	49%	22%
Agriculture	67%	8%	25%	20%	30%	50%	29%	42%	29%
Art	32%	32%	36%	13%	27%	60%	6%	31%	63%
Music	32%	50%	18%	41%	33%	26%	22%	41%	37%

TABLE 6 (continued)

	Class of 1960			Class of 1962			Class of 1964		
	Most	Fairly	Least	Most	Fairly	Least	Most	Fairly	Least
Shorthand	68%	16%	16%	81%	7%	12%	48%	30%	22%
Bookkeeping	54%	30%	16%	56%	33%	10%	55%	31%	14%
Typing	61%	24%	12%	59%	38%	3%	60%	32%	8%
Physical Education	24%	50%	26%	21%	48%	31%	30%	35%	35%
Home Economics	68%	23%	8%	55%	36%	9%	26%	43%	30%
Health	17%	66%	17%	16%	50%	34%	20%	48%	32%
Social Activities	36%	48%	15%	54%	30%	16%	36%	45%	19%
Athletics	35%	17%	48%	35%	45%	20%	50%	33%	15%
Driver Training	24%	48%	28%	33%	47%	20%	38%	36%	28%

useful subjects. Perhaps these students who stated that English was of very little use to them received the wrong kind of English training in high school. Perhaps upon entrance into high school the students should be divided into the vocationally minded and the educationally minded. Then the kinds of training which would be necessary in college could be stressed upon the students who planned to further their education. The group which planned to seek no further educational training could possibly profit from practical things such as filling out job applications or writing all kinds of letters.

Physical education numbered next in order of least importance; then came science, history, Latin, agriculture, and art, in that order. One should note, however, that only a small percentage of the students answered this question.

Among the courses not listed on the questionnaire, six students listed speech as being most useful and two other students mentioned clerical practice as most useful. Clerical practice students were assigned to work as a secretary for individual teachers one hour per day. This experience introduced them to working for an employer and having a boss.

When examining Table 6, one should keep in mind that students were instructed to mark the subjects as to usefulness only if they had taken the subject, otherwise, they were instructed to leave the space before the subject blank.

One should also note that English, science, mathematics, history, and physical education were required courses and so they were naturally taken by a greater percentage of the students, and therefore, this might have influenced the table. Also, since some of the students were not yet in their chosen occupations, or since some of the students were still in school, their interests at the time which they filled out the questionnaire might have influenced their responses.

Table 6 indicated that all three classes ranked English and mathematics as being most useful. The consensus of opinion seemed to be that history was only fairly useful. No heightening was observed in the importance placed on science over the years surveyed as one might have expected since national influence had been placed upon the importance of science and mathematics. One can note that the class of 1962 placed slightly more importance upon the two subjects mentioned just previously than did the other two classes. Few students were finding foreign language to be one of their most useful subjects.

It seemed significant that there had been a noticeable decline in the importance placed upon industrial arts and agriculture. Perhaps this indicated that only the members of the class of 1960 had been out of school long enough to appreciate the help which these two subjects had given. But, perhaps more possibly, this could have indicated that fewer.

graduates were finding these subjects of future use to them as perhaps many of them were entering other types of work.

Art and music had also decreased in usefulness. In most cases the music in which the students participated was that of a group nature. When these student got out of high school they no longer had a group with which to work and so many of them never played their instruments again.

Shorthand, bookkeeping, and typing received high percentage scores of usefulness, although shorthand hit a marked high in 1962 and a low in 1964. Many students found that typing was of much use to them. This indicated that no matter what line of work the graduates entered they still found some use for their typing ability.

Physical education and health were both considered to be fairly useful. One girl mentioned that her first aid training was one of the most useful things she learned while in high school. There was a decline in the importance placed upon home economics in 1964. However, maybe these girls had not been out of school long enough to find out how useful their training in this field would be to them.

The members of the class of 1962 felt that their social activities and experiences were more useful to them than did the other graduates. Athletics, too, increased in importance. The driver training usefulness score had increased only slightly over the years, although there had been an expansion of this program since 1960.

In connection with the Newton testing program, most of the students from the classes which were surveyed felt that they benefited in some way from taking the tests, even if for no other reason than that of getting out of class.

The staff at Newton had not made a practice of telling students their IQ scores. However, Table 7 indicated that students felt that they should have been told about their intelligence quotients. A greater part of the students felt that it would have been of even more value had their aptitude test scores been interpreted to them. Although not quite as strong an opinion was expressed, the students also felt that it was important to have personality and performance or physical skills tests interpreted.

TABLE 7

STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR OWN TEST SCORES

Year Grad- uated	Do you feel that the school should tell students their IQ's as report- ed on tests, in order to help students realize their probable potential?			Do you feel that the school should interpret aptitude tests (tests reveal- ing natural or potential capacity or ability) to students?			Do you feel that it would be of any value to have personality tests inter- preted to students?			Do you feel that performance or physical skills tests should be interpreted to students?			Do you feel that you benefited in any way from taking the kinds of tests mention- ed in the preced- ing four questions?		
	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe
1960	53%	20%	27%	87%	2%	11%	52%	21%	27%	66%	16%	18%	54%	26%	20%
1962	55%	21%	24%	77%	7%	16%	62%	16%	22%	77%	11%	12%	72%	14%	14%
1964	64%	13%	23%	76%	13%	11%	64%	24%	12%	64%	20%	18%	66%	11%	23%

The graduates from all of the years surveyed felt that if the school had helped them choose a vocation, the experience would have been valuable for them. They also felt that if the school had scheduled speakers from various occupations, the talks would have been profitable. Percentages were also very high which expressed the opinion that students could have benefited if the school had presented them with opportunities, while they were still in high school, to have visited the business firms in which they felt they might have sought future employment.

The percentages declined slightly, although they were still 50% or over on the question of whether or not the school should have provided part time work for students in an occupation of their choice. More students answered "maybe" on this question. This indicated that many of the students would have liked for the school to have acted as a kind of placement service for them.

Several of the graduates who answered the questionnaire were doubtful of the worth of a policy which would have provided the time for students to have worked part time by letting them out of a part of their regularly scheduled school day. The percentage of "no" answers on this question was over 50% in 1960 but as low as 25% in 1964. The members of the class of 1962 felt that the school should have provided the time for part time work much more strongly than the other classes.

TABLE 8

POSSIBLE PROCEDURES TO HELP STUDENTS TO CHOOSE VOCATIONS

Year Grad- uated	Do you feel that the school should help students choose a vocation?			Do you feel that it would be profitable to have speakers from various occupations come to school?			Should the school provide oppor- tunities for students to visit the business firms which they feel they might like to work in?			Should the school arrange for part time work for students in an occupation of their choice?			Should the school provide the time for students to work part time?		
	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe
1960	69%	10%	21%	80%	5%	15%	81%	11%	8%	57%	19%	24%	26%	51%	23%
1962	71%	6%	23%	85%	3%	12%	79%	7%	14%	50%	11%	39%	14%	48%	38%
1964	64%	5%	31%	83%	5%	12%	73%	9%	18%	59%	13%	28%	45%	25%	30%

When former graduates were asked about the help which they had available in the school to help solve their personal problems, large percentages said that they had no help in school with any of their personal problems.

	Had Help	Had No Help	Maybe Had Help
1960	10%	77%	13%
1962	14%	78%	8%
1964	21%	70%	9%

The percentages of students who had received help with their personal problems had increased only slightly over the years surveyed.

However, these same students who received very little help with their personal problems felt that the students should have someone in school to whom they can go for personal counseling. And so when asked, "Do you feel that students should have someone in school to whom they could go to discuss their personal problems?" they replied as follows:

	Yes	No	Maybe
1960	62%	8%	30%
1962	67%	19%	14%
1964	50%	26%	24%

The graduates who returned the questionnaires felt that it was important for the school to provide all of the help possible to students who wished to further their educations. Most of the students felt that it would have been quite valuable if speakers from various kinds of colleges, business firms, and trade schools had met with them.

TABLE 9

REPLIES FROM STUDENTS AS TO WHAT SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO HELP
THE STUDENT WHO WISHES TO FURTHER HIS EDUCATION

Year Grad- uated	Do you think that schools should help students to choose a college if the student wishes to further his education?			Should more opportunities to visit colleges be provided while school is in session?			Should the school schedule speakers from colleges, business firms, or trade schools?			Do you feel that it would be valuable to have college catalogues available?		
	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe
1960	88%	1%	6%	71%	12%	17%	85%	9%	7%	87%	3%	10%
1962	87%	4%	9%	73%	15%	12%	98%	1%	1%	89%	1%	10%
1964	86%	1%	13%	79%	11%	10%	82%	4%	14%	86%	2%	12%

Many students felt that opportunity for college visitation should be provided and that the school should schedule speakers from varied occupations. The students also felt it would be of value to have various college catalogues available to browse through or to study.

The greater percentages of the graduates surveyed answered "yes" or "maybe" when asked if they felt the school should help alumni. The more recent graduates felt more strongly on this question.

More of the older alumni believed that adult education courses at night would be valuable. Perhaps this was because the members of the class of 1960 had been out of school long enough to realize that what they needed to help them in their present jobs, or what they needed to help them to obtain better jobs was more education. Perhaps the graduates from the class of 1960 felt they needed the knowledge of certain subjects at the time of this survey which they felt no inclination to take while in high school.

Approximately one-fourth of the graduates who answered the questionnaire felt that they would probably take a night course if one in which they were interested was offered. Various answers were received as to the kind of courses which they would like to take. One graduate said that he would like to take "any subject that might be difficult at a university because of the lack of individual help."

Business department courses ranked highest with fifteen former students mentioning that they would like to take business courses and an additional twelve students stating that they would like to take a typing course. Nine

TABLE 10
SCHOOL'S ROLE IN HELPING ALUMNI

Year Grad- uated	Do you feel that the school should help alumni?			Do you think adult education courses at night would be valuable?			Would you probably take one if available?			Should the school provide occupa- tional information for alumni?			Should the school give references to prospective employers or to training institutions?		
	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe
1960	37%	22%	42%	82%	5%	13%	25%	33%	42%	54%	23%	23%	87%	6%	7%
1962	54%	15%	31%	67%	10%	23%	27%	35%	38%	59%	11%	30%	91%	2%	7%
1964	45%	13%	42%	59%	11%	30%	24%	27%	49%	70%	14%	16%	87%	0%	13%

students expressed a desire to take a math course; eight students wanted to take English. Seven girls expressed a desire to take a home economics course; however, strangely enough five of these girls graduated in the class of 1964 and none in the class of 1960. Perhaps the girls who graduated as long ago as 1960 had learned about homemaking matters the hard way and felt that they would make better teachers than students.

Six students desired to take a science course, three foreign language, three mechanics, three industrial arts, three American history, two fine arts, two welding, two agriculture, two nursing and child care, and then several other courses were mentioned by just one student.

Over 50% of the graduates who answered the questionnaire from each class felt that the school should provide occupational information for them. A high 70% of the ones who graduated last year felt that the school should provide them with occupational information in the future. Perhaps these high totals indicated that the alumni were in need of information about other occupations at the time of this survey in order that they might better their positions. On the other hand, perhaps they felt that it would be good for the school to start a program in order to help future students, but that they were in need of no help.

Almost all of the students felt that the school should provide the service of giving references to employers.

When graduates were asked about their suggestions for the future betterment of the school, sundry and extremely varied replies were given. Several former students, many of whom no longer lived in the community surrounding Newton, had evidently read much in the newspapers about the famous city of Newton, Illinois, and its dress code and strict rules. Therefore, several recommendations appeared as to the abolishment of our dress code! One student replied, "Get rid of the strict dress code! There is no need to make the school like a jailhouse." Another student replied that the school should, "Keep morale high; students should be challenged, but also relaxed and reassured. Do anything to develop a well balanced, confident and determined character."

Another topic which was mentioned several times was the terrible possibility of not having a senior trip. Some of the graduates felt that the present students were going to be grossly unjustly treated if they did not have a senior trip and a prom. A greater number of other alumni stated that the school should require more homework, five subjects a year instead of four, and much less emphasis on athletics.

Several students mentioned that more mathematics was needed and one student mentioned that the school should hire math teachers, not converted physical education teachers. Another graduate stated that the school should "get more teachers

like Frank Chizevsky and Norma Eaton who have a way of planting things into your mind so you don't forget them."

Several other graduates mentioned the need for more and better counseling to arrange for talks from occupational representatives, to explain college curriculums, to arrange for a day when representatives from colleges and trade schools could answer questions, and to arrange for a special session to help students to understand the proper procedures in registering for the college of their choice. One graduate said that he believed the school should "have a career day where people from all careers come and answer questions that may be asked and give information to the students. Have college students talk to them about college and how to prepare for it." One boy included a page and one-half list of books which he felt high school students should read in order to prepare for college. These books were basically on study habits.

Alumni also mentioned the need for tutoring, remedial help, and financial assistance for some students.

The need for the school to set up a trade school and to insert other courses into the curriculum that would be of help to students who did not wish to further their education was also mentioned.

Other replies were extremely varied, for example, two students mentioned that there should be a course explaining

the civil service exam and another student mentioned that the passing grade should be raised to at least a C.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From considering the information presented on the previous pages, several conclusions can be drawn and recommendations can be made. Table 1 indicated that former students desired guidance in choosing their future occupations at early dates so as to have had time for as much preparation as possible.

Tables 2 and 3 indicated that the greatest number of graduates became students in other educational institutions. Secretaries ranked second in number, factory workers third, and farmers fourth. Well over 50% of all Newton graduates furthered their educations beyond high school as Table 4 indicated.

Table 5 indicated that the graduates reported they had very little help in choosing their life's work. Former students also had very little help in choosing and entering colleges, although teachers had provided some assistance.

According to the alumni who answered the questionnaire, as Table 6 indicated, English, mathematics, and business courses had high scores of future usefulness. On the other hand, agriculture and industrial arts seemed to have been

becoming less useful. A decreasing importance was also being placed on home economics although this might have indicated that girls from the more recent classes had not been out of school long enough to appreciate the techniques taught them in these courses.

Alumni placed emphasis on the need for the school to interpret tests of all kinds. They especially felt that aptitude test interpretation was valuable.

Former students strongly felt that the school should take all possible steps to help students choose vocations, such as having speakers from various occupations and allowing them to visit business firms which offered future employment. Over 50% of the students also felt that they could have profited if the school had acted as a placement service in arranging part time work; however, only approximately 25% of these same students felt that time should have been taken from the school day for work.

Although the students who answered the questionnaires had very little help with their personal problems, they felt that the school should provide someone with whom students can discuss personal problems.

The former students felt that the school should provide all possible help for the student who wishes to further his education. Having more college visitation and

having speakers from colleges, business firms, and trade schools ranked high.

Table 10 indicated that graduates felt that adult education courses would be valuable and approximately 25% of the graduates stated that they would take one if one in which they were interested were offered. Business courses, including typing, ranked highest in desirability.

From this information several conclusions can be drawn:

(1) Since students desired more help in choosing occupations, it seems that it would be profitable if the school system would hire additional counselors in order to provide time for more student help. Counseling during the junior high school years, and if possible during the elementary years would also have been of value in helping students to choose occupations at early dates so as to have had time for adequate preparation.

(2) Also, the school needs a strong college oriented program, since so many of Newton's graduates are furthering their educations. However, one should consider that these graduates attended several different kinds of colleges and educational institutions. It would seem that the school should evaluate its college preparatory courses and add additional courses if they were deemed necessary. The business department should also be evaluated and strengthened if found deficient in

order to properly prepare graduates for the jobs in business occupations. If possible, the school should introduce separate high school programs for students who need a terminal high school education and for those who need a college preparatory high school education.

(3) More counselors were needed so that students would have had someone in the school system to help them with their personal problems.

(4) Present students should be informed as to the scores of future usefulness which were given to various subjects by graduates so that they can adjust their programs accordingly if they so desire.

(5) The guidance program does not seem to have been adequate in providing the time for interpreting tests to students, and graduates felt that this would have been valuable.

(6) Students needed more information about various occupations and so programs presenting speakers from varied occupations were needed.

(7) The school should also organize a placement service if possible.

(8) More information about all types of colleges should also be provided.

(9) Adult education courses should be provided in subject fields most requested.

The writer of this paper offers the following recommendations:

(1) It is recommended that Newton Community High School employ additional counselors to help students choose vocations at early dates in their schooling, to plan college preparatory and terminal educational curriculums, to help students gain entrance into educational institutions, to interpret tests, to plan programs which would introduce students to many types of jobs, to organize a placement bureau for graduates and students, to discuss personal problems, to plan adult education courses, and to follow up graduates.

(2) It is further recommended that additional studies similar to this one be done at Newton and at other schools in order to confirm the information compiled in this paper and in order to try to find out what is needed in order to improve the schools.

APPENDIX I

Letter to Accompany Graduate Questionnaire

NEWTON COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

Member North Central Association

Newton, Illinois

Hewey Tweedy
Superintendent

Lowell Diel, President
Dale Lambird, Secretary

Dear Alumnus,

You were selected from the list of our graduates to help us better prepare future students. Would you please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it this week.

The results of this alumni survey will be instrumental in improving the educational opportunities for future students. Please give your frank and unbiased opinion.

We appreciate your prompt help.

Very truly yours,

Mrs. Marsha Kuhl
Survey conductor

Mr. Hewey Tweedy
Principal

Enclosure

APPENDIX II

Graduate Questionnaire

Permanent Address _____

Mo.	Yr.	Mo.	Yr.	Employer or Business Firm	Your Position
-----	-----	-----	-----	---------------------------	---------------

[illegible]

.....

Are you satisfied with your present occupation? Circle one--YES NO

If you do not intend to remain in your present occupation for more than one year, what do you intend to do?

Mo.	Yr.	Mo.	Yr.	Kind of Training	Institution or Agency
-----	-----	-----	-----	------------------	-----------------------

Who in high school helped you to choose a vocation? Circle one--No one
Principal
Teacher
Other

How much help did you receive in choosing a vocation?

- Circle one--1. Much
2. Very Little
3. Some
4. None

How well were you prepared by the high school for what you are doing now?

- Circle one--1. Well Prepared
2. Fairly Well Prepared
3. Poorly Prepared
4. Not Prepared

How much influence did the school provide in helping you to decide on further education and in helping you get into the higher educational institution of your choice?

- Circle one--1. Much
2. Some
3. Very Little
4. None

What training did the school give you which you think has been of very little value to you and which you feel will be of very little value to future students?

Mark the following list as to usefulness. If you did not take the subject, leave it blank!

Put an "M" in the blank for most useful!

Put an "F" in the blank for fairly useful!

Put an "L" in the blank for least useful!

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| _____ 1. English | _____ 11. Shorthand |
| _____ 2. Mathematics | _____ 12. Bookkeeping |
| _____ 3. History | _____ 13. Typing |
| _____ 4. Geography | _____ 14. Physical Education |
| _____ 5. Science | _____ 15. Home Economics |
| _____ 6. Foreign Language | _____ 16. Health |
| _____ 7. Industrial Arts | _____ 17. Social Activities |
| _____ 8. Agriculture | _____ 18. Athletics |
| _____ 9. Art | _____ 19. Driver Training |
| _____ 10. Music | _____ 20. Other _____ |

CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER

Do you feel that the school should tell students their IQ's as reported on tests, in order to help students realize their probably potential?

YES NO MAYBE

Do you feel that the school should interpret aptitude tests (tests revealing natural or potential capacity or ability) to students?

YES NO MAYBE

Do you feel that it would be of any value to have personality tests interpreted to students?

YES NO MAYBE

Do you feel that performance or physical skills tests should be interpreted to students? YES NO MAYBE

Do you feel that you benefited in any way from taking the kinds of tests mentioned in the preceding four questions? YES NO MAYBE

Do you feel that the school should help students choose a vocation? YES NO MAYBE

Do you feel that it would be profitable to have speakers from various occupations come to school? YES NO MAYBE

Should the school provide opportunities for students to visit the business firms which they feel they might like to work in? YES NO MAYBE

Should the school arrange for part time work for students in an occupation of their choice? YES NO MAYBE

Should the school provide the time for students to work part time? YES NO MAYBE

Did the school help you with any of your personal problems? YES NO MAYBE

Do you feel that students should have someone in school to whom they could go to discuss their personal problems? YES NO MAYBE

Do you think that schools should help students to choose a college if the student wishes to further his education? YES NO MAYBE

Should more opportunities to visit colleges be provided while school is in session? YES NO MAYBE

Should the school schedule speakers from colleges, business firms, or trade schools? YES NO MAYBE

Do you feel that it would be valuable to have college catalogues available? YES NO MAYBE

Do you feel that the school should help alumni? YES NO MAYBE

Do you think adult education courses at night would be valuable? YES NO MAYBE

Would you probably take one if available? YES NO MAYBE

If your answer was "yes" what kind of course would you like to take?

Should the school provide occupational information for alumni? YES NO MAYBE

Should the school give references to prospective employers or to training institutions? YES NO MAYBE

Do you have any suggestions as to what the school should do to be of more help to students in the future? Please list any suggestions which you might have.

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